

Fairbury Fair 1876 Poem

This poem was written by John Francis Myers shortly after the Fairbury Fair began in 1876. He was a member of the original Fair board.

Fairbury Fair Poem

On one September morning,
The weather being clear,
I hied me off to Pontiac
To see their annual fair.
'Twas all of three and twenty miles,
From where I did reside,
Too far to make the daily trip,
I was not satisfied.

I next went to Potosi
To see their one-day show,
Had no accommodations
Just a picnic, you know.
An idea dawned upon me,
Increasing every day;
To start a fair at Fairbury
That would the people pay.

To John G. Steers of Indian Grove
Quite soon I did propose
A first class fair at Fairbury,
And what do you suppose
His answer was? "Dear sir," said he,
"I really do expect
If I help you at Fairbury,
Potosi will object.

For I am a director there,
I fear they would me kick,
Only for that I'd help you,
And do it very quick."
I then went to John Virgin,
Solicited his aid;
To organize at Fairbury
A fair of upper grade.

Said he, "My friend, there's Pontiac
With once each year a fair,
I wish not to antagonize
Nor thwart their prospects there."
Again I saw my friend John Steers,
And said, "Come join me quick,
We'll start a fair at Fairbury,
No matter who may kick.

The kickers will all fall in line,
And will rejoice to see
A first class fair at Fairbury,
And all will happy be.
I very soon got his consent,
We did then advertise
A day to meet in Fairbury,
And there to organize.

It proved to be a grand success,
For all the people round
Quite soon acquiesced in the scheme,
And did its praise resound.
It still retains its prestige
Well known all o'er of late,
And none of equal magnitude
Surpass it in the state.

These honorable gentlemen
Who helped to make it go
Were the first set of officers
To run that splendid show.
John Virgin was the president
And John G. Steers the vice,

Smith Olney was secretary,
Bartlett, treasurer without price.

The following were directors
On success they were bent,
Their time and services were free,
They did not charge a cent.
D. L. Murdock and Bob Elmore,
Henry Kingman, all good men;
Ben Cumpston and Ed Norman,
J. F. Myers, who wields this pen.

George Myers, Jacob Bailey,
Henry Skinner, Stephen Herr,
John Earnheart, Danny Potter,
Owen Finnegan were there.
And there was Joseph Phillips,
With good stock, upon my word,
And also William Younger
Who showed his Devon herd.

And also D. R. Potter,
With fine stock right on hand;
And Uncle Benny Cumpston,
They prizes often did land;
And my friend Ed Mahoney,
And Percy James in line,
With Mr. Merrill, also,
Their stock was always fine.

And Thomas Ramey showed some stock
Of extra size and grand;
Virgins imported drafters
Sometimes did prizes land.
And many more exhibits
Of transient men were there,
Ladies' exhibits added much
To make the Fairbury Fair.

But Walton Brothers showed the best
Variety all around—

Hardware, machinery, carriages,
No better could be found;
Their dry goods made a fancy show,
They were of every line,
They pleased the people, don't you know,
They were superbly fine.

And other early officers,
T. Beach and Rufus Straight,
John Zimmerman and H. L. Bruce,
With Dominy, were great.
And many other gentlemen
Gave us much timely aid,
Were always ready to assist,
After the plans were laid.

Now Livingston may well be proud
Of her great Fairbury Fair;
For many, many do enjoy
A lovely visit there.
The profits educational
Received while at the fair,
Will far exceed the time and cash
You spend while you are there.

Let everyone appreciate
The efforts made to boom
A first class fair at Fairbury,
And keep her on the boom;
Then when we all pass over there,
To that bright land of rest,
Posterity will boom her on,
And keep her still the best.